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JRNL 473.01: International Reporting

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JRNL 473 International Reporting

Covering the reclamation of 'home' among Fukushima nuclear evacuees

Spring semester 2017

Meets Tuesday and Thursday, 4 to 5:20 p.m. in Don Anderson Hall Room 301

Instructor

Associate Professor Nadia White

Office: Don Anderson Hall 408

Email: nadia.white@umontana.edu

Office Hours

Mondays 1-3

Wednesdays 9-11

or by appointment

Course Objective

This course prepares students of journalism and related majors for the opportunities and challenges of news reporting abroad. It acquaints them with practical challenges that arise from working in unfamiliar international environments. This course will meet twice a week through the regular semester and culminate in a three-week reporting project focused on Fukushima, Japan.

Course description

Six years ago, almost a half million people fled the area surrounding TEPCO's Dai-Ichi power plant after its meltdown. Many of those people expected to be gone for a week or two. Six years later, many know they will never be able to return to the homes they left; many more don't want to return to a place they don't trust is safe; and others have returned to homes that look nothing like the places they left behind. Meanwhile, local and national governments are working to assure citizens the land is safe and that rural communities, already in decline, may be considered home once more.

In the spring of 2017, government and industry payments to many people who evacuated the areas affected by the nuclear accident are scheduled to end. These payments have been controversial, essential, divisive and instructive. Removing them reveals or removes the nostalgic notion of furusato and asks people in very real ways to reach a new understanding of what it means to go home.

Students taking this class and practicum in international reporting will publish and disseminate stories on the theme of "Home" completed during the three-week reporting trip to Japan. They will present their work to a live audience before leaving Japan.

For core elements of coverage, the class will blend reporting in Fukushima with reporting done in the spring in Libby, Montana as a way of establishing for a Montana audience the context of reclaiming home and restoring reputation after an industrial accident.

In Japan, students will meet with and interview politicians, journalists, activists and ordinary citizens affected by the second largest earthquake ever recorded and the tsunami and nuclear meltdown that followed. They will use their reporting, interviewing and storytelling skills to show the challenges of reclaiming a sense of home and restoring the reputation of a place. Those stories will be published or broadcast before online and with partner media outlets before the class concludes on June 11, 2017. All stories reported for this class will be completed and published prior to the end of the class.

Preparation for that reporting project will serve as the practicum for students to learn across three areas essential to succeeding as an international journalist or other international information-gathering missions: Practical skills, prereporting, reporting and delivering news from abroad.

Outcomes

Practical travel skills

Successful students will learn practical skills required to succeed when traveling and reporting international stories, including how to:

- Pack and prepare for an overseas assignment
- Plan and execute an international itinerary
- Stay safe and healthy in a foreign country
- Work respectfully within the cultural norms of a foreign country

Prereporting

Successful students will develop a basic familiarity with subjects intended to inform the final project of this course, such as:

- Japanese history, culture, media and politics
- Nuclear power and global energy demands and policies
- Contemporary response to natural and industrial disasters
- The psychology of survivors of disasters
- Global response and lessons available to other nuclear power nations after the meltdown at the Fukushima Dai-Ichi powerplant in March 2011

Students will also prepare the logistics needed in order to communicate their stories across several media. Among other things, logistics preparation will include developing a:

- Technology plan
- Social media plan
- Story dissemination plan
- Marketing plan

Reporting

This is an advanced reporting class. Successful students will enhance and apply these specific skills, among others:

- Direct interviewing skills
- Interviewing through translators
- Note taking
- Story development, production or writing and revision across multiple media
- Working in news teams
- Story dissemination
- Digital and live audience engagement

Etc.

Professionalism

- To learn is your responsibility. It is imperative that you follow all instructions closely and completely. Otherwise, you risk squandering the opportunities this course affords.
- Adhere to all deadlines and closely follow instructions for assignments.
- Don't be late.
- Notify me in advance if you are ill or need to miss a class for other valid reasons.
- You get one free absence, as long as you notify me in advance.
- Mute your electronic devices and use them for class-related activity only.
- To act professionally at all times will positively affect your final grade.
- Unexcused absences and late shows will negatively affect your final grade.
- Missing one third of classes will automatically result in failing the course.

After Hours Access

If you do not already have after hours access to Don Anderson Hall, complete and submit the appropriate after-hours access form online by February 5. NO after hours access requests will be processed after that date.

Graduate Increment

Graduate students enrolled in this course will be on a graduate-level reading and presentation schedule. They will also develop and implement an assessment of the program. They will survey participants twice (at the beginning and the end of the program) and submit a report on June 30, 2017.

Academic Honesty

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the [Student Conduct Code](#).

Same Work for Multiple Classes in J-School

You may not submit for this course any assignment that has previously or will be concurrently submitted for another class, unless you receive prior approval from the professor for this course. To do so without permission will result in an "F" for the assignment, and could result in an "F" for the course.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

This course is accessible to otherwise qualified students with disabilities. The syllabus and grading will be done through Moodle. To request reasonable program modifications, please consult as early in the semester as possible with the instructor. [Disability Services for Students](#) will assist in the accommodation process.